

## Pedagogical framing of OER—The case of language teaching

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### Abstract

This study investigates what characterises teachers' pedagogical design of OER, and potential affordances and constraints in pedagogical design in an open education practice, when contributing to a Swedish repository Lektion.se. The teachers' framing of the OER shared on the repository included the analyses of a delimited number of OER for learning Swedish. The analytical work with analysing what characterised the OER, was followed up with teacher interviews to explore teachers' incentives for sharing. The OER selected for analysis were investigated linked to the features given in the repository, to identify what distinguished different categories of OER when framed by the teachers. The OER displayed a continuum of ways of framing an activity, though the majority was represented by low levels of description, which afforded less guidance. The teachers expressed a positive attitude towards sharing. The findings suggest that OER need to be defined and supported by web features to enable going beyond reuse.

**Keywords:** OER; sharing; participation; pedagogical design; repository

### Introduction

The development of Web 2.0 has led to new arenas for learning in which participation and contribution have a prominent position (Drotner, 2008; Dohn, 2009). Part of this development has been the increased databases of online materials for learners in general, and of particular interest for this paper the vast possibilities brought forth for teaching and learning activities in terms of online open access. What these potential transforming conditions can bring to education, are still under scrutiny from different perspectives and with challenging and critical questions. Open educational practice (OEP) and Open Educational Resources (OER) are such areas, commonly referred to as movements or initiatives. OER have not been as adopted in teaching and learning practice as first assumed when the concept was introduced at the UNESCO conference in 2002 where OER were defined as "educational resources that are freely available for use, reuse, adaptation, and sharing" (Nikoi & Armellini, 2012, p. 166). Similarly, Pawlowski and Bick (2012) explain OER as "freely accessible resources for educational purposes" (p. 209). A great deal of what is posted in online learning repositories is created by teachers to be used with students, in the classroom as well as online (Clements & Pawlowski, 2012; McGreal, 2011).

To be able to define implications of OER, Wiley (2014) developed the so-called 5Rs framework (*retain, reuse, revise, remix, re-distribute*). The framework describes the following rights for access to materials: *retain* (the right to make, to own and control copies of content), *reuse* (in a wide range of ways), *revise* (adaptation, making adjustments, modifications and alterations), *remix* (combinations with the original or revised content with other open content, thereby making something new such as for example a mashup), and finally, *re-distribute* (sharing the new content with others) (Wiley, 2014).

### Purpose

This paper aims to scrutinise a repository of OER from the point of view of what characterises teachers' pedagogical design of OER in an open education practice and what the affordances and

constraints are in teachers' pedagogical design in the sharing of OER. To date, there is little research concerning teachers' pedagogical design of OER and the potential implications of pedagogical foundations for OER which is the overarching interest of this study.

The focus in our study is the Swedish repository of OER, Lektion.se, which is well-known in the Swedish teacher community<sup>1</sup>. The teachers' uploading and sharing of learning activities and rationale for participation will be explored. The number of teachers who actively contribute by sharing their OER in the repository is low, however, when compared to the number of members in Lektion.se.

In the light of escalating migration, Swedish as a Second Language (SAS) and Swedish for Immigrants (SFI) are two subjects which are becoming increasingly important. With this as a point of departure, we argue it is of interest to shed light on teachers' conditions for contributing and sharing OER in an online space designed specifically for teachers. The focus on Swedish for Immigrants (SFI) and Swedish as a Second Language (SAS) will serve as an example, due to its increased societal interest and potential interest on a more generic level linked to implications of the escalated migration. The number of posted OER to these two subject areas is low, which also reflects the state of OER in other subjects in this repository.

To address the conditions for pedagogical design of OER by the community of teachers in the Swedish repository, Lektion.se, the following research questions were developed:

1. What characterises teachers' pedagogical design of OER in open education practice, when digitally mediated on the repository Lektion.se?
2. What are the potential affordances and constraints in pedagogical design in teachers' sharing of OER on the repository Lektion.se?

## Framing the concept of OER

While it can be said that MIT introduced open educational materials in 2001, we have still not reached a shared understanding of how to conceptualise OER, and the "fuzzy" concept is still being negotiated (Pawlowski & Bick, 2012; Nikoi & Armellini, 2012). Tuomi (2013) argues we must "provide a more detailed picture of the conditions of openness and the nature of open resources" (p. 60) to be able to discuss what OER can imply for learning. Furthermore, it is argued that OER could have an impact on the transformation of education, and could bring about "new forms of collaboration and production" (Tuomi, p. 73), together with "calls for a paradigm shift" for OEP (Nikoi & Armellini, 2012, p. 167). This in turn could ensure the development of high-quality OER as well as stimulate pedagogical innovation.

Expectations have been high, but not yet been reached when it comes to adopting OER in education (Pawlowski & Bick, 2012). Concerning the impact on higher education, it has been argued that the value of OER is yet to be clarified, and there are issues in need of being addressed for OER to have an impact on education (Nikoi & Armellini, 2012). We have still not "reached a critical threshold" (2012, p. 167). In addition to this discussion, in order to understand OER we need to move from the current state as a "descriptive, prescriptive, and often speculative" perspective (2012).

With respect to OER as part of the learning process when linked to the UNESCO definition, Blythe (2014) suggests that learning is a "process that requires editable, digital materials in keeping with the complex and dynamic nature of learning and teaching" (p. 662). Moreover, education is discussed as closed or open, which in turn indicates different approaches to learning and teaching materials. While a closed system implies traditions characterised by printed material, spaces for learning confined to classrooms and the focus of learning as knowledge as packaged into discrete units that are transmitted. Open education, on the other hand, is based on quite different assumptions. Open

education assumes learning as creation in collaboration with others, including open digital materials that can be easily adapted to contextual conditions and requirements (Blythe, 2014, p. 662). Referring to Weller (2010), the granularity of OER is explained as part of a continuum, in which we can find large- and small-scale OER. The first can be exemplified with an online university course at one end of the line and with a lesson plan on the other end (Blythe, 2014). Similarly, Pawlowski and Bick (2012) referring to Pirkkalainen and Pawlowski (2010), also define OER as sharing “instructional/didactic designs and experiences” of lessons, besides more physical artefacts such as textbooks (p. 209).

Some issues concerning OER remain unresolved for researchers and according to Wiley, Bliss, and McEwen (2014) there are five remaining challenges that need to be tackled: metadata to enable OER search, sustainability linked to costs, imbalance between subjects, and addressing contextual aspects and remixing. Regarding the latter issue, Wiley, Bliss and McEwen (2014) suggest that there is little empirical evidence that users are engaged in more than reusing.

From a specifically critical focus on the OER movement in higher education, Knox (2013) has reviewed current literature to investigate what foundations were given for encouraging OER and what views of learners were being implicitly assumed of relevance for teaching and learning. The findings indicate that there is a general lack of pedagogical rationale and theoretical framework connected to OER. Besides arguing for a critical exploration of the OER movement, Knox proposes the need for a critical exploration of the rationale for OER in higher education, research on the role of pedagogy, which tends to be overlooked when OER are connected to self-directed learning, as well as focusing on pedagogical implications of OER in education (Knox, 2013).

## Transforming conditions for teaching and learning

During the last decades, research on teaching and learning on digitally mediated sites has received a great deal of attention, pointing in particular to questions of what potential consequences digital technologies may have on educational practices. Their transforming dimensions as cultural tools (Säljö, 2010) have been argued to bring *social implications* (Erstad, 2011) and are not easily compared with previous development of technologies.

Human action as situated in social practices and the development and appropriation of technologies lead to a “performative nature of learning” according to Säljö (2010, p. 61). In a similar vein, Jenkins, Clinton, Purushotma, Robison and Weigel (2006) framed a participatory culture that described how the affordances of digital tools enable ways of producing content, which increasingly have involved collaboration, co-authoring, publishing and sharing material online as part of social practices (Bradley & Vigmo, 2013; Godhe, 2014). This also points to an increased focus on collaborative dimensions of learning that depart from interests in learning as part of human social practices (Säljö, 2010; Ludvigsen, Lund, Rasmussen & Säljö, 2011; Vygotsky, 1978).

As a consequence of learning about digital media as contextual and not being neutral, it follows that learners’ engagement can be seen as part of “cultural forms”. Websites are designed according to certain “rhetorics” that can for example offer opportunities to link to other sites, to navigate in special ways, and offer various ways of user interaction (Buckingham, 2006, p. 265). Similarly, from a sociological perspective, Selwyn (2011) points to the over optimistic expectations, or “techno-romantic” views of what technologies per se will add to a learning situation, and argues there is cause to adopt a more critical stance towards the uses of technology in educational contexts. The critique is directed towards a general rhetoric not departing from realistic uses of technology in practice. In the above sections we have displayed how pedagogical issues have been conceptualised to indicate some of the argued transforming conditions for teaching and learning, contextualised as social and collaborative activities.

The next section discusses pedagogical rationales as they are framed in research on OER, in particular in relation to language teaching and learning.

## Focused studies on OER in language learning and teaching

We now turn to some recent empirical studies to illustrate findings of OER research in language learning and teaching.

Though sharing and reuse can be argued to have been part of previous practices, the creation and sharing, and reuse of activities can now be done much more easily under different conditions with web resources. In spite of this, OER have not been widely adopted by teachers and the reuse and sharing have not been visible enough for teachers, indicating difficulties with access, and therefore leading to a low uptake (Beaven, 2013).

LORO<sup>2</sup> was developed as a resource with the aim of creating a repository for language learning and teaching online and from a distance, with over 700 resources for six languages (Beaven, Comas-Quinn & Sawhill, 2013; Comas-Quinn & Fitzgerald, 2013). Findings from studying LORO indicated that the repository was used for finding resources, for inspiration and for ensuring a more standardised teaching practice. Furthermore, it was found that time for development of teaching practices, an increase in their confidence, the appreciation of having colleagues' feedback on own uploaded resources and increased quality of teaching material, were of importance, as teachers would prepare and choose their best work for sharing (Comas-Quinn & Fitzgerald, 2013). Of particular interest was that pedagogy is "embodied in the open resources available" and that this, according to the language teachers led to "experimentation, collaboration and discussion" (Comas-Quinn & Fitzgerald, 2013, p. 5).

In a study with the intention of combining an interactionist perspective on learning with a constructivist one, language learning was explored as "working 'with' language" (Dixon & Hondo, 2013, p. 111). This descriptive study involved an online resource for learning German, *Deutsch Interaktiv*, framed as a self-paced resource offered for free. This online resource is described as a programme, mainly addressing receptive language learning activities, that is listening and reading, thus lacking social aspects of language in use. Regarding notions of OER, the perspective taken in this study was the re-purposing of an online programme as an OER (Dixon & Hondo, 2013). Openness in this study can be interpreted as open for integration of resources, rather than resources being open in the sense implied in the 5R framework.

The iTILT project (interactive Technologies in Language Teaching) was investigated as an OER that focused on the use of interactive whiteboards to encourage communication among language learners together with their teachers who participated in training during a year (Whyte, Cutrim Schmid, van Hazebrouck Thompson & Oberhofer, 2014). To investigate practices from an action research perspective with 40 language teachers from classrooms in seven European countries, more than 200 short videos were captured. Together with other training materials with comments, the video clips were made available online. The aim was to investigate how OER can enhance open practices in particular together with interactive whiteboards (Whyte et al., 2014). Based on findings from previous research, teachers indicate several foci for continued development of the OER field; quality assurance as one aspect linked to teacher education, pedagogical issues and teachers' continued development (Whyte et al., 2014).

To summarise, the studies presented serve to exemplify how development and research have addressed teaching practices, and explorations of resources in various teaching and learning contexts. The research studies presented, demonstrate that some have adopted an evident pedagogical framing, situating the uses of OER in an already developed structure aimed at teaching

and learning a language. The aims of these studies were to integrate present structures, but also develop and extend the teaching and learning space by including other resources and links.

## Methodological approach

This section describes the data collected. Further, it displays the context, and how the analytical processes were performed.

### Context

The study is based on teachers' online postings and uploaded OER in Lektion.se, the largest Swedish repository of OER with over 230 000 members, a majority being teachers since affiliation to a school is among the prerequisites for membership. The Lektion.se repository hosts a vast number of OER, approximately 27 000, representing all school subjects and levels. The present study focuses on OER tagged by teachers either as Swedish as a Second Language (SAS) or Swedish for Immigrants (SFI). At the point of designing the web site in 2004, the original intentions from the creators were for teachers to easily connect with each other through an open educational space Lektion.se used *lektion* (lesson) instead of *OER*<sup>3</sup>. The name Lektion.se would symbolise an arena that teachers were used to in their daily practice.

On the web, Lektion.se promotes itself as a database with learning and teaching materials produced by teachers for teachers; resources which can be accessed for free once being a member. On the site, it is declared that teachers will be able to access *thousands of tips and ideas for teaching* (translation from Swedish). Apart from OER, there are also other resources available such as a teacher forum enabling social and collegial exchange, available job positions and an archive with a selection of links and services for teachers.

### Data

The data consisted of posted OER during a delimited time period of three months from March to May 2015. In total, 40 OER were shared under the two selected subjects, Swedish as a Second Language and Swedish for Immigrants, covering the levels from Swedish primary to upper secondary level. These OER were posted by 17 teachers, of which a majority only shared one OER, while the most active teacher shared 8 contributions.

Further, interviews were made with participating teachers around the conditions of sharing in order to increase the understanding of teachers' engagement in sharing. All 17 teachers were contacted through the mailing tool in Lektion.se and six volunteered to be interviewed. They were asked five open ended questions regarding frequency in posting, reasons for posting, how the site was situated in their teaching, their reasoning about why few teachers post OER, and other online resources they used. The five questions were:

- 1) How often do you contribute by posting on Lektion.se?
- 2) Why do you contribute by posting on Lektion.se?
- 3) How do you use Lektion.se in your teaching?
- 4) There are many registered teachers on Lektion.se but only few contribute by posting; what do you think are the reasons for that?
- 5) What are some other online platforms you use in your work?

Through scrutinising specific areas within language learning, that is the examples of Swedish as a Second Language and Swedish for Immigrants, a delimited representation was offered of the OER posted on Lektion.se. The aim was to illustrate and exemplify a restricted number of OER with

concrete examples to enable an in-depth qualitative analytical perspective regarding teachers' pedagogical design, and potential affordances and constraints of sharing OER in the context of Lektion.se. Multiple rounds of analysis of OER were carried out to address the nature of the OER teachers uploaded.

When submitting an OER to Lektion.se, tagging is requested. There are a number of pre-selected OER type options for the contributors to choose from in a drop-down list in alphabetical order in Swedish such as assignment, article, discussion points, own research, help to students, group work. However, it is also possible to enter a new key phrase if any of these types should not apply to the OER in question. Further, according to the repository instructions, each posted OER should be provided with a description of what it is about and how the OER has been used, by entering information in a text field. This design enables the teachers to get an idea about the material before downloading. The system accepts most file types; uploaded files are, however, automatically converted into .pdf files. The incentive behind this procedure is that most people can open this file format (Lektion.se, instruction video for teachers). However, assuming that not all teachers are aware of this, there may be some constraints regarding editing, like revising and remixing according to Wiley's (2014) framework.

The OER in Lektion.se are constituted by information on the start page of the OER; Author (*Författare*), Date (*Datum*), Subjects (*Ämnen*), Level (*År*), Lesson type (*Lektionstyp*) as well as the description of the learning description (*Beskrivning*). On the top right, there is a link for downloading the OER lesson (*Ladda ner lektionsfil*).

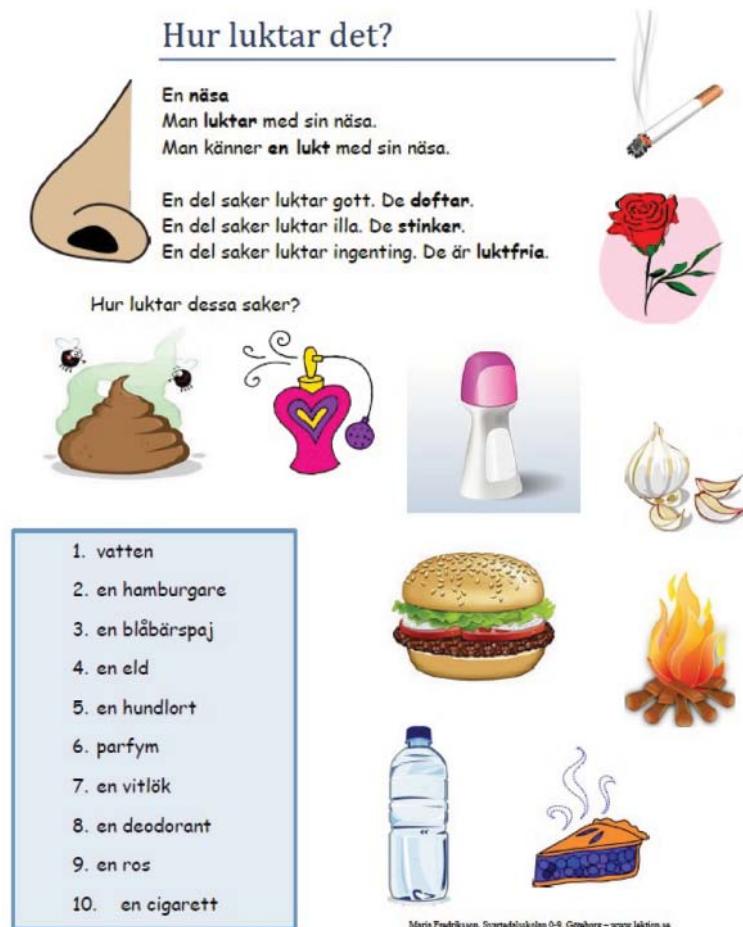
The screenshot shows the lektion.se website interface. At the top, there's a green header bar with the 'lektion.se' logo, a user profile for 'LindaBradley', and a 'Logga ut' button. Below the header, a navigation bar includes 'Start', 'Lektioner' (which is highlighted in red), 'Skicka in', 'Länkar', 'Forum', 'Jobbarkiv', 'Leverantörsarkiv', and 'Mina sidor'. Underneath the navigation bar are links for 'Nya lektioner', 'Populära lektioner', 'e-läromedel', 'Lättläst', and 'Mediaarkiv'. The main content area features a lesson titled 'Lektion : Hur luktar det?'. The lesson details are: 'Författare: Maria Fredriksson', 'Datum: 27 maj', 'Ämnen: SV/SO, SFI, SVA', 'År: Grundskola År 4-9', and 'Lektionstyp: Arbetsuppgift'. A red box highlights the 'Beskrivning' (Description) section, which contains the text: 'Ett papper med bilder på olika föremål som luktar på olika sätt. En kort arbetsuppgift där eleverna får ord som har med lukt att göra. Eleverna ska även para ihop rätt ord med rätt bild. SVA och ev. SFI.' To the right of the description are social media sharing icons (likes: 4, share, comment) and a download link ('Ladda ner lektionsfil' in PDF format, 311 kB). The right sidebar includes sections for 'Redigerbara filer' (For MS Office), 'Diskutera lektionen', and social sharing links for e-post, Facebook, Twitter, and a 'Dela länk' button with the URL 'http://www.lektion.se/l/1/'. Below the main content are three sidebar sections: 'Medlemmar som gillade lektionen gillar också...', 'Fler lektioner från författaren', and 'Favoritlistor med lektionen'.

**Figure 1: The interface displayed on the start page of the OER *How does it smell? (Hur luktar det?)*, when clicking on an OER link where the information about the OER is presented.**

The description (*Beskrivning*) is highlighted with the red square in the left column.  
(See Table 1, Level 2 with a translation of the description into English).

Concerning the social media dimension (Figure 1) this particular OER has received 4 likes. This feature also becomes visible when searching among "Popular lessons", which provides the most

liked OER at the top of the list displayed as a result of a search. All 40 OER had likes (thumbs up) from other participants for the OER. 12 had 1–9 likes, 20 had 10–19 likes, and 8 had between 20 and 50 likes. Due to lack of teachers discussions connected to the OER selected for our study, this feature is not within the scope of the study. This could be a limitation, since no data was possible to retrieve to address the research questions. Further, our data did not include the number of downloads made for each lesson since they were regarded as not contributing to the interests of the present study.



**Figure 2: The downloaded OER lesson *Hur luktar det?* (How does it smell?)**

In this case, the representation modes are text and image in a fill-in exercise.

The combination of reading the instruction on the start page of the OER and then downloading the OER lesson provides an interested teacher with information of the intended application of the OER. Figure 2 shows the downloaded OER lesson from Figure 1 of choosing the right smell connected to the drawn images.

## Analysis and results

We categorised the OER provided by the teachers, from the point of view of descriptions of the learning description for the OER (see red square around Beskrivning in Figure 1) and the chosen OER type. The descriptions were scrutinised in-depth together with investigations of the pedagogical design of the OER activity. Further, the results of the interviews are discussed.

### Scrutinising pedagogical descriptions

In the instructions required by Lektion.se concerning sharing and uploading OER, teachers were asked to describe “how the lesson has been used and what it is about” (translated from Swedish). In other words, the only instructions given to the teachers indicate focusing on the application of the OER in a learning context, together with attributed information about the objective of learning.

Investigating and analysing the teachers’ descriptions, resulted in OER ranging from providing basic information to expanding on formulations to assist others in their potential reuse of the OER. Analytically, we identified three levels of descriptions for the OER, (see Table 1). These descriptions were also scrutinised concerning if or how they were related to other qualities of open other than reuse, as described by Wiley (2014). The 5Rs were used to investigate whether the teachers’ design could indicate affordances and constraints in the sharing of OER in this particular repository and what was found as characteristic of the teachers’ pedagogical design of their OER.

Table 1: Three examples of teachers’ descriptions of OER (Level 1, 2 and 3)

	Learning context	Learning instruction	Intended learning outcomes
<b>Level 1</b>	<i>Analysing a debate article</i>	<i>Information not given by the teacher</i>	<i>Information not given by the teacher</i>
<b>Level 2</b>	<i>A paper with pictures of images which smell differently</i>	<i>A short work task where pupils get words dealing with smell. The pupils should also pair the right word with the right image. SAS and possibly SFI.</i>	<i>Information not given by the teacher</i>
<b>Level 3</b>	<i>Let the dice decide! The students will let the dice decide what an image will look like.</i>	<i>Each student will get a piece of paper with 6 squares. In each square there are six numbered alternatives. They choose environment with the dice. They google images of objects that the dice gives them. Then they draw the images on the paper, color them, and cut them out. After that, they describe their image orally or in text. Target group: SAS.</i>	<i>They get to practice vocabulary, concord and prepositions. The more advanced students can write a story based on the twisted picture. They also practice fine motor ability by elaborating a bit. There are many suggestions of how to collaborate, practicing classroom language.</i>

Table 1 displays three examples of OER with different levels of description. They are becoming more and more elaborate, from providing a learning context only (Level 1), to providing a learning context and learning instruction (Level 2), and finally providing learning context, learning instruction and intended learning outcomes (Level 3). The examples under each level were translated from Swedish (Level 2 in the table is displayed in Figure 1, description (*Beskrivning*)).

In Level 1, only the *Learning context* is provided. In the example in Table 1, the teacher has introduced the activity as *Analysing a debate article* and nothing more (OER posted 6 May, 2015). Thus, the description to this exercise is neither giving any guide to other teachers nor opening for other ways of appropriating the OER. This approach in describing the activity and learning context was the most prominent among the 40 analysed OER, 19 belonging to this category (see Figure 4 below, which is attributed to Level 1).

In Level 2, the *Learning context* is complemented with a *Learning instruction* (see Table 1). This particular example introduces an OER with the *Learning context* that “A paper with pictures of images which smell differently” (OER posted 27 May, 2015). The following *Learning instructions* accompany the *Learning context* with suggestions of how to apply the OER in the classroom “A

short work task etc. . . etc". Writing a *Learning instruction* together with providing a *Learning context* was represented by 10 out of the 40 posted OER.

The third example, Level 3, illustrates a more elaborated approach providing *Learning context*, *Learning instruction* and *Intended learning outcomes* (See Table 1). The *Learning context* to the OER *Let the dice decide!* (OER posted 20 May, 2015), opens up for ways of using the OER. Further, *Learning instructions* describe the activity in detail, in terms of suggested procedures in the classroom. Also, this example specifically mentions learning as situated in a classroom, i.e. also providing *intended learning outcomes*. 11 of the 40 analysed OER were identified as Level 3, a more elaborated pedagogical framing by the teachers.

Concerning the OER types, the most common representation and visualisation was text in combination with images or fill-in exercises. 14 were pure text, 2 were videos and 2 PPT presentations. Categorising the *OER types* in each of the 40 OER, the learning activities were; speaking (12), writing (7), grammar (4), a combination of listening, reading and speaking (3), a combination of writing, speaking, reading (3), word practice (3), culture (3), reading—vowels (2), mathematical concepts in Swedish (2), language history (1).

In sum, when teachers share a more elaborated description of the pedagogical activities with the downloaded OER activity: *Learning context*, *Learning Instruction* together with *Intended learning outcome* it facilitates for other teachers to use the OER.

### **To share or not to share—teachers' reasoning about a sharing OER and open educational practice**

The analysis of the six interviewed teachers contributed to insights into the conditions around online sharing of open teaching and learning resources. The views of the respondents were quite uniform in terms of answers to the five questions identified in the interviews. Their reasoning contribute to shedding some light on issues that need further research. To the first question, dealing with frequency in posting, the outcomes of the interviews corroborate that there is a large number of members on the site although few are engaged in posting OER. Generally, teachers are periodically involved. However, one aspect raised by the respondents, who do share, is that teachers would like to give others the advantage they have had in obtaining materials themselves.

To the second question of reasons for posting, the incentives for contributing are expressed in terms of the environment being a supportive one where teachers appreciate getting feedback and "likes" of work performed in an extended meeting space with colleagues also outside of the physical space at work. An opportunity to get response from others is a strong driving force by those who are active in sharing their resources. There is a notion that visualising what is done in a sharing-culture is a positive thing. Another reason for posting is to share ideas with other teachers of what has worked in the classroom. This points to social and collegial dimensions of importance for contributing.

Concerning the third question of how using the site is situated in teaching, it is used as a bank of ideas for teaching. Since the tool has a transparent search function when time is short between classes, this assists in finding some activities for teachers. Another answer given is that when lacking existing exercises within a certain area, it is possible to fill that gap by producing new exercises and then sharing, which the respondents do.

To question four, reasoning about why few teachers post OER, lack of time or prioritising other non-digital dimensions of teaching is one major reason. Another reason stated is that teachers might be reluctant because they are uncertain about holding the right quality to be shared in an online environment. The common understanding is that teachers will become more collaborative if they

just get past the threshold of being afraid of being critiqued. There is a lack of sharing culture as a phenomenon as expressed in this quote from one of the interviewees:

“There is no sharing culture in our school; each and everyone is hiding in their office and refuses to show WHAT s/he is doing. I have ONE colleague that I know of who uses Lektion.se but I don’t think that she has shared anything yet. . . . but it’ll come :).”

Finally, a more cynical side is the proprietor aspect, i.e. that teachers may be unwilling to share what they have invented.

In the fifth and final question about other online collaborative resources used in teaching apart from Lektion.se, teachers mention other common digital channels such as social media and video-sharing, e.g. Facebook and YouTube. Once the border is crossed of starting to post online, the respondents claim that it is much easier to continue, being more productive in sharing online.

## Discussion and conclusion

In this study, we investigated what characterises teachers’ pedagogical design of OER in an open educational practice, exemplified by Lektion.se, a web resource for teachers for sharing and reuse of resources that are openly licensed. Our specific interest aimed at investigating a limited number of OER created and shared for Swedish as a Second Language and Swedish for Immigrants on this particular site. We drew on Wiley’s (2014) framework of OER to explore and demonstrate affordances and constraints in teachers’ pedagogical design in OER. With our analyses of OER, we suggest there are affordances with elaborated pedagogical framing of the OER on the site. A less elaborated pedagogical design can constrain other teachers’ uses of the OER since they would have little guidance in how to make use of the OER.

The site Lektion.se has a structure for uploading and sharing a resource that requires certain information to be provided. In the analytical work, we found three levels of describing the OER, from short descriptions of *Learning context* to longer ones of *Learning instructions* and even *Intended learning outcomes* that opened up for other teachers to go beyond the twin concepts of *share* and *reuse* (see Beaven, 2013). Though we identified three levels in our data, there were few examples that were open for using and developing the OER in the way Wiley describes. This indicates that there are teachers, although few in our data set, who developed a more open pedagogical design in their descriptive and instructive comments to their OER.

The name of the site *lesson* is normally associated to activities indicating an educational space and within a certain timeframe. As argued by Blythe (2014) and Pawlowski and Bick (2012) lesson plans can be shared as examples of didactic designs and experiences from lessons on a micro level. However, the lessons in the programme do not exclude learning online and distance, synchronous or asynchronous as other aspects of pedagogical design, though these are seldomly highlighted. The notion of *lesson* as essential to the rhetoric of the site Lektion.se, risks constraining the mindset of participating teachers. This connects to Buckingham’s (2006) notion of websites holding certain rhetoric in terms of what teachers are required to do for uploading and sharing. This can be seen as an example of the movement of OER still being on a descriptive and prescriptive level (Nikoi & Armellini, 2012). The automatic conversion to pdf-format in Lektion.se, can be a constraining aspect, since we can assume that quite a few teachers are less aware of how this format can be modified. The drawback of the decision to convert everything to .pdf could have been explained earlier on the site since it severely limits the usability of material beyond reuse as lesson plans (c.f. Wiley, Bliss & McEwen, 2014).

There is little awareness and no consensus of the definitions of the concepts of OER and, thus, our findings also suggest that the participatory culture (Jenkins et al., 2006) is based on a restricted

definition of OER, to state only sharing and reuse. Most teachers in our limited scope of 40 OER, shared only one resource, and the activities described were more traditionally framed and with a clear tendency for text-based OER. However, judging by the relatively high number of “likes” given to the investigated OER, this shows that participants on the site appreciated the OER. These results can also be interpreted as reflecting existing teacher practices, and that development of and uptake of OER should be seen as part of an inherently imperfect world (Selwyn, 2011). The need to balance over optimistic assumptions of what OER can add needs to be included in the discussion and further development of OER.

The lack of awareness of the underlying intentions with an OER in this kind of open practice can become inhibiting, not for sharing as such perhaps, but for sharing OER that can be used by other teachers (and learners) as resources that can be further developed and re-contextualised, as in the 5R framework (Wiley, 2014). The teachers themselves mention fear of not reaching quality standards as one potential explanation for not sharing. The low number of contributing teachers may also reflect a general collegial approach, as one characterised by a non-sharing culture. The limited number of interviews should be interpreted with caution. It may, however, indicate that there are practitioners’ sharing cultures that exemplify the need for investigating qualities in OER for language learning and language teaching. Moreover, it can be argued to exemplify teachers’ critical stance and caution towards over optimistic expectations of technology (Selwyn, 2011) as an actor of change.

Though presenting findings from a limited case study, we argue that the contribution to the research within OER and language learning and teaching align with previous calls for more research on pedagogy and design and the role of OER (Knox, 2013). The results from the case study presented here, brings to the fore that there is a need to make explicit the pedagogical rationale underpinning the uses of OER to teachers, to enable development of OER beyond reuse. Besides defining the concept OER and what they imply for teaching practices, a repository needs to include features that support more diverse contribution but also continue to address and further develop quality aspects.

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Lektion is translated to Lesson in English

<sup>2</sup> LORO <http://loro.open.ac.uk/>

<sup>3</sup> Email communication with Lektion.se, 12 November 2015 and 18 May 2016

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